



Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Stewardship Council Meeting  
April 4, 2008  
Devens Commons Center, Devens, Ma

Meeting Minutes

*Stewardship Councilors in Attendance:* Chair, Dick Cross; Councilors, Christina Crowley, John Natoli, Laura Johnson, and Whitney Hatch.

*Public Attendees:* Ray Weber, Friends of Robinson State Park; Joe Zorzin, Consulting Forester Town of Athol; Mike Leonard, Consulting Forester Town of Petersham; Carol Gilmour, Friends of Robinson State Park; Dave Gaffney, Citizen of Hinsdale; Claudia Hurley, Friends of Robinson State Park; Ellen Arnold, Friends of Upton State Forest; Agnita Knott, Friends of Upton State Forest; Mike Ryan, Friends of the Fells; Sharl Heller, Friends of Myles Standish State Forest; Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood; Bill Boles, New England Mountain Bike Association; Anne Urbaczewski, Massachusetts DAR; Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon; A. Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee; Renata Von Tschar, Charles River Conservancy; Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood.

*DCR Staff in Attendance:* Commissioner Rick Sullivan, Stephanie Cooper, Jeff Daley, Conrad Crawford, Suzanne Wilson, Gary Briere, Gary Davis, Jim Lindsey, Ron Clough, Bill Dunham, Priscilla Geigis, Sam Overton, Jim DiMaio, Mike Testa, Susan Hamilton, Brian Shanahan, Peter Church, Marcelle Valentin, Joe Rotondo, and DCR Supervisory Field Staff.

I. **Call To Order ( 1:00 p.m.), Chair Cross**

- a. Cross opened meeting and greeted all. Thanked the Commissioner and staff for inviting the Stewardship Council to the Supervisor's Academy.

II. **Commissioner's Report, Commissioner Rick Sullivan**

- a. Commissioner Sullivan mentioned the great strides happening at DCR and thanked all for being there. DCR is in that time frame for many events, projects and programs as noted below.
- b. The Supervisor's Academy, a great event in which the park supervisors, district managers, regional managers, and senior staff attended sessions which had a strong safety theme. The Academy presented an opportunity for staff from across the agency to network and gain knowledge of from one another.
- c. On March 31<sup>st</sup> the 75<sup>th</sup> Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Anniversary event was held at the State House to recognize and celebrate nine CCC Alumni and the men who put together the CCC which served and still serves the state wide park system.
- d. In the horizon is the kick off for the Park Fellows Program this summer were DCR partners with the UMASS Donahue Institute to offer ten qualified and motivated college students, eager to explore their interest in park management and operations, will be selected to participate in the Park Fellows Program. DCR is working with the Donohue Institute to make sure the program is diverse and that the applicants reflect the community. The program begins June 2, 2008.
- e. Great Park Pursuit (GPP) launches on May 10<sup>th</sup> at Borderland State Park. DCR has been active in the national Children and Nature movement that seeks to reconnect children with the outdoors and the natural environment, and the GPP is the centerpiece of our efforts. We have a corporate

sponsor, LL Bean! There will be six stops for the GPP program and will end on Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup>. Join a team and enjoy the outdoor adventures.

- f. Park Serve will kick off on May 17<sup>th</sup> and statewide initiative to clean up, plant flowers, and do special projects to improve our state parks, beaches and forests. Last year it was a great success and we expect even greater success this year. Please volunteer and get involved.
- g. Commissioner Sullivan will send a letter to the Council members with additional updates in his Commissioner's Communications.

### III. **Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules**

#### **a. Finance Committee, *Whitney Hatch***

- i. Nothing to report and will have something next meeting
  - a) Council should get together in a subsequent meeting on how they can be influential on getting the bond bills through.

#### **b. Policy Committee, *Laura Johnson***

- i. Nothing to report

#### **c. Resource Management Plan Committee, *Henry Lee***

##### **i. Update on Chestnut Hill RMP**

- a) Councilor Henry Lee is not here so discussion on the Chestnut Hill RMP will be discussed at the next Stewardship Council meeting.

### IV. **Special Business**

#### **a. Off- Highway Vehicle Enforcement Group Update, Gary B**

- i. Stated that Monday, March 31st was a historic day because about 20 organizations gathered at 100 Cambridge St., Boston and signed off on working group recommendations that had been supporting the recommendations. Passed out letter with the signatures of support. Due to time constraint decided to wait to do overview of the power point presentation and paper work with the recommendations. Gary asked Heidi Ricci to comment. Ms. Ricci is pleased where they are now but also commented that we are in the month of April and that the riding season is coming next month and that a short term plan should be put in place. Sharl Heller made comment regarding the information to help with OHV enforcement and that Friends are working on how the citizens in community can give input on how to work on dealing with ATV & OHV enforcement also mentioned to keep the flow of information communicated that will be essential.
  - Councilor Natoli asked about how big is the gap in the enforcement.
    - a. Gary responded how a staff member worked with local police and local groups and rider community to see how instrumental they can be in the enforcement.

### V. **Approval of Minutes from March 7, 2008**

- a. Edits needed, will be presented again at the May meeting.

VI. **Public Comment**

- a. **Ray Weber, Friends of Robinson State Park** – Voiced the concerns of the Friends group and citizens in regards to clear cutting and patch cutting at the forest. There is worry that wildlife such as birds is being exposed to open clear cuts. Appreciates Commissioner Sullivan's involvement with the Friends and Partners.
- b. **Claudia Hurley, Robinson State Park** – Ms. Hurley urged the Stewardship Council and Commissioner Sullivan to fill the vacancies in the Council. Legislation states there should be representation from the west and the FRSP would like to submit two additional names and their resumes for consideration. They are Licensed Consulting Foresters, feels that having a forester on the council would be beneficial in regards to their expertise. They have submitted a person last month, in total three recommendations.
- c. **Mike Leonard, Consulting Forester Town of Petersham** – Recommended Forester by the Friends of Robins State Park. Expressed desire to be part of the council. Discussed three issues. No. 1: Most private forest lands are in poor condition due to wide land liquidation cutting in the last half century, suggest requirements for forest cutting plans are for good forestry and prepared by licensed foresters. No. 2: Management of public land, protection of the resources has to be the #1 priority and feels timber production should be focused on private lands than public lands. No. 3: Politics and policy needs a balance, should be less complicated and an independent voice outside DCR.
- d. **David Gaffney, Citizen of Hinsdale** - Expressed that he would like to be on the panel. He cares deeply about forest and wants to be help in the decision process. Would like to see some sensitive environmental policies implemented.
  - i. Commissioner Sullivan explained the processes of nominations are submitted goes to the Governor's Office for review and consideration. The Governor appoints the seats to the Stewardship Council. He hopes to push along the process in the State House to fill these seats soon but we do not control the process. Agrees the three seats need to be filled as soon as possible.
- e. **Ellen Arnold, Friends of Upton State Forest** – Thanked Commissioner Sullivan for attending one of the Friends' meeting and stated that he received the highest compliment for engaging and being involved. Congratulated Gary Briere on taking on the task of the OHV Enforcement Group. Very happy with the process and this first step happened with OHV Enforcement Group. Discussed that property issue where there are threats from OHV misuse. Suggested Satellite Parks in some of the parks that do not have enough or no staff that can monitor OHV misuse, to be considered in the RMP process. Would like a random or visible presence of enforcement in the parks. Invited the council to Upton Ma to see the places that are not special in facilities but are in other ways.
- f. **Joe Zorzin** – Offered support and praise to Mike Leonard, recommended candidate from the West for the council by the Friends of Robinson State Park.
- g. **Mike Ryan, Friends of the Fells** – Brought to the attention of the council and public about a press release on March 31<sup>st</sup> of the park caucus letter signed by 56 legislatures their desire to not have the transfer of the parkways to Mass Highway. He read the letter and gave copies to the council. Mentioned that the Parkway group has a meeting with the Secretary Bowles regarding this matter. Mentioned letter in yesterday's globe from James McCaffrey from the Sierra Club discussing Middlesex fells on regards to the projects and the MEPA process.
- h. **Sharl Heller, Friends of Myles Standish State Forest** – Mentioned the CCC program she attended on Monday which the Commissioner discussed earlier at the state house and mentioned the honor and great event. Inquired and would like more information about a policy of where the Friends and Partners can work together on projects with the District and Regional Managers.

Concerned about statewide policy for volunteers working at the parks and forest. Need clarification on jobs they can and can not do.

- i. Commissioner Sullivan mentioned that the volunteer policy is one of the top ten policies working on to get out which Conrad Crawford and Jeff Daley are working on. Working on park serve issues with the union in regards to state employees taking the day off to work in a state facility, working with the administration and human resources. Statewide policy on job descriptions letters to go out to all friends groups in regards to jobs and the beach manager job descriptions has gone out.
- i. **Steve Kaiser, Association of Cambridge Neighborhood** gave kudos to Gary Briere on the difficult task working with the committee on the OHV Enforcement and was pleased with what has been accomplished. Mentioned discrepancy in the report in regards to the 96 sound decimal testaments in report states it's actually 98 sound decimals that is a problem. OHV Enforcement report lacking in legal definitions. Needs a lot of work and sent out paperwork on the legal aspect and the potential issue on the noise level with motorcycles. Parkway situation feels good that bond was passed. Concern on the Fells need legal regulations with the developer that developers must discuss project totality and feels this is lacking on DCR side to find out about the violations of developers.
- j. **Bill Boles, New England Mountain Bike Association** – Noted that they would like to be known as the Trail Care Association. Currently they have 78 trail care dates listed on their website. Informed all that they are having a two day trail care workshop next month and advised anyone interested can see him after the meeting.
- k. **Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon** –
  - i. Mentioned the policy on volunteer involvement and hopes that it will address some issues that has come up in regards to pool certifications and documentation of resources and how volunteers can help DCR document what's out there in the landscape in a cooperative way.
  - ii. In regards to the Forestry the review process on public forums, pleased that there will be public involvement in reviews.
  - iii. Discussed her involvement with the development of Devens and the history, 1/3 parts of the land is designated open space, just updated open space plan with Mass Development and looking for holders on conservation restrictions.
- l. **Renata Von Tschar, Charles River Conservancy** –
  - i. Mentioned that she is glad the environmental bond bill temporarily resolved, but remembers two meetings ago a mention from the Stewardship Council would like to place a policy statement want to make support the coalition and there stance.
    - Commissioner Sullivan said Secretary read letter and are in support that money going toward environmental bond.
    - Commissioner Sullivan also mentioned a lobbying date on April 9<sup>th</sup> at 10 am at Appalachian Mountain Club Office on Joy Street right by the State House will lobby on the environmental bill.
    - Renata asked about donors being recognized and asked if a policy will be worked on. The Commissioner stated it is a priority but we don't want the parks turning into memorials of donors and not take away the credibility of the parks. Many issues around this topic but the policy is a priority.
- m. **A. Richard Miller, Cochituate State Park Advisory Committee**
  - i. Mentioned that District Manager, John Dwinell in Framingham was a great advocate and helpful with the various issues at Cochituate State Park. Working on a couple of action items.

- Cochituate State Parks had applied for the partnership grants and they received it.
  - Discussed issues and work on non-chemical issues to remove algae. Floating circulators are placed and the first time to have this. Cochituate in good shape and first full season for circulators. Dudley pond has circulators going around.
  - Worried about railroads being sold off without the right of refusal and said not the same as power lines right of way.
- n. **Jim Lindsey**, Vice President of the Local AFSCME 3485, introduced Kevin Drake, President of the Local. Mentioned that they have a good working relationship with the commissioner on the volunteer policy and looks forward to coming to more of these meetings.
- o. **Last Comments**
- i. Chair, Dick Cross gave last remarks and thanked the Commissioner for the Stewardship Council to have a chance to meet DCR staff. Noted that there is a different momentum with this administration and that they have an extraordinary senior team. He feels they are a team and working as one to make a difference.

VII. **Meeting Schedule** – Next meeting will be Friday, May 2, 2008 at Quabbin Reservoir.

*Meeting adjourned 3:30 pm*